

Message Text

MRN: 1976COLOMB000742 SEGMENT NUMBER: 000001 ERROR READING TEXT INDEX
FILE; TELEGRAM TEXT FOR THIS SEGMENT IS UNAVAILABLE
ADP000
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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-05 AGR-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 OFA-01 COME-00 DLOS-04

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-01

OES-03 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAL-01 FEA-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 /148 W
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R 271300Z FEB 76
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4326

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 COLOMBO 742

E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS: PORG, PFOR, US, CE
SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: REPLY TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON
HOST GOVERNMENTS

REF: STATE 37591

6. INFLUENCE AND INTER-ACTION:

INDIA PROBABLY HAS THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON SRI LANKA'S
MULTILATERAL POLICYMAKING AND DECISIONS. THE TWO
GOVERNMENTS, PARTICULARLY DURING BANDARANAIKE GOVERNMENTS
IN SRI LANKA, HAVE HAD SIMILAR APPROACH ON MOST INTERNATIONAL
ISSUES BASED ON COMMON ANIT-WESTERN, ANTI-
COLONIALISM BIAS. YUGOSLAVIA PROBABLY IS SECOND IN
INFLUENCE, BASED ON MUTUAL ATTACHMENT TO NON-ALIGNMENT

AND TITO'S PRESTIGE. ARAB COUNTRIES ARE PARTICULARLY
INFLUENTIAL ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES AND CEYLONese GOVERNMENT
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HAS CONSISTENTLY TENDED TO FOLLOW THEIR LEAD.
RECENTLY, CEYLONESE HAVE IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES MORE
CLOSELY WITH MODERATE ARAB POSITION OF EGYPT RATHER THAN
THAT OF SUCH RADICAL ARABS AS IRAQ AND LIBYA.
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA ALSO HAS SOME INFLUENCE ON
SRI LANKA'S STANCE ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. THIS HAS
BEEN MORE IN NEGATIVE SENSE, HOWEVER,AS UNTIL RECENTLY
PRC HAS NOT TAKEN MANY POSITIVES IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS.
BECAUSE OF ITS ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP
WITH PRC, GSL TRIES NOT TO SUPPORT ANYTHING PRC STRONGLY
OPPOSES. CEYLONESE ARE ALSO INFLUENCED BY CONTACTS WITH
OTHER COMMONWEALTH MEMBERS AND PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE
VALUES HER CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH SOME COMMONWEALTH
LEADERS. OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE LITTLE INFLUENCE
ON GSL POLICY IN MULTILATERAL AREAS.

7. AS MENTIONED ABOVE, SRI LANKA HAS BEEN QUIETLY TRYING
TO SHIFT NON-ALIGNED FOCUS TOWARD ECONOMIC ISSUES AND TO
BLUNT MORE RADICAL INITIATIVES WHICH IT FINDS EMBARRASSING AND
POTENTIALLY DAMAGING TO ITS RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER
COUNTRIES. ONE APPROACH HAS BEEN TO TRY, WITH LITTLE
SUCCESS, TO FORM SOME TYPE OF (PRESUMABLY MORE MODERATE)
ASIAN GROUP WITHIN MULTILATERAL FORUMS. THIS IS SEEN AS
COUNTERWEIGHT TO MORE COHESIVE AND EFFECTIVE AFRICAN
AND ARAB GROUPINGS. UNFORTUNATELY FOR THIS EFFORT,
MORE ISSUES SEEM TO DIVIDE THAN UNITE ASIANS.

8. INSTRUCTION TO DELEGATIONS:

ALTHOUGH FOREIGN MINISTRY DOES DRAVE UP INSTRUCTIONS AND
GUIDELINES FOR ITS DELEGATIONS TO MULTILATERAL MEETINGS
(BECAUSE OF THEIR REPRESENTATION ABROAD DELEGATIONS ARE
OFTEN SENT FROM COLOMBO AND ARE THEREFORE WELL BRIEFED), IT
USUALLY LOSES CONTROL ONCE MEETINGS START. ALSO, POOR
COMMUNICATIONS AND LIMITED PERSONNEL IN FOREIGN OFFICE
TO BACKSTOP DELEGATIONS ON DAY-TO-DAY BASIS, MEANS
THAT DELEGATIONS ARE NORMALLY GIVEN FAIRLY WIDE LATITUDE
TO MAKE DECISIONS ON SPOT, KEEPING WITHIN BASIC INSTRUCTIONS.
THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE IN MAJOR ECONOMIC/
FINANCIAL CONFERENCES WHERE SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM
COLOMBO NORMALLY REPRESENT GSL.
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9. CONTROL OF REPRESENTATIVES:

SRI LANKA'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN, SHIRLEY AMERASINGHE,
HAS OFTEN ACTED INDEPENDENTLY, DUE TO HIS PERSONAL
RAPPORT WITH SUCCESSIVE PRIME MINISTERS, HIS STATUS AS
A SENIOR CIVIL SERVANT AND THE FORCE OF HIS OWN PERSONALITY.
THIS MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR HIS GOVERNMENT, OTHER THAN

THE PRIME MINISTER, TO CONTROL OR INSTRUCT HIM. ALSO, SINCE PRIME MINISTER IS HER OWN FOREIGN MINISTER, ABSENCE OF STRONG FULLTIME PERSONALITY AT HEAD OF MINISTRY TENDS TO GIVE OTHER REPRESENTATIVES ABROAD GREATER LEEWAY ON MORE ROUTINE MATTERS. HOWEVER, OTHER REPRESENTATIVES ARE USUALLY RESPONSIVE TO COLOMBO'S INSTRUCTIONS. NONE HAVE SEPARATE POLITICAL BASE OR FOLLOW POLICIES DISTINCT FROM COLOMBO'S

10. RECEPTIVEITY TO U.S. APPROACHES:

THE SRI LANKA GOVERNMENT IS OFTEN NOT RECEPTIVE TO U.S. REPRESENTATIONS ON NUMBER OF MULTILATERAL ISSUES, SINCE NON-ALIGNED CONSENSUS IS USUALLY NOT IN ACCORD WITH OUR POSITION. GSL, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN RECEPTIVE TO U.S. REQUESTS THAT IT NOT PUBLICLY ATTACK U.S. POLICIES OR US U.S. AS DOMESTIC SCAPEGOAT, AS WE HAVE INDICATED THAT SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD NOT PROVIDE CONCRETE BASIS FOR GOOD RELATIONS. IN SOME CASES, WHERE IT DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH SRI LANKA'S PERCEPTION OF ITS OWN FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS, GSL HAS BEEN RECEPTIVE TO U.S. REPRESENTATIONS ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. APPEALS, WHERE BACKED UP BY CONVINCING ARGUMENTS, HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL ON SOME ISSUES, E.E., DOREA AT LAST UNGA.

11. GSL DOES NOT NORMALLY SOLICIT USG SUPPORT ON MULTILATERAL MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE OR ITS APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. MAIN EXCEPTION HAS BEEN GSL'S REQUEST FOR SUPPORT ON ITS INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE PROPOSAL IN UN, TO WHICH WE HAVE NOT GIVEN POSITIVE RESPONSE.
VAN HOLLEN

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